REMARKS

This Amendment is responsive in any manner identified above, and is further responsive in any manner indicated below.

PENDING CLAIMS

Unrelated to any prior art, scope or rejection in any prior application, appropriate claims have been amended, cancelled or added in order to adjust a clarity and/or focus of Applicant's claimed invention, and are simply clarified claims in which Applicant is presently interested. At entry of this paper, Claims 1-5, 17 and 18 are pending for consideration and examination in the application.

Applicant respectfully reserves all rights to file subsequent related application(s) (including reissue applications) directed to any/all previously claimed limitations/features cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer, or to any/all limitations/features not yet claimed, *i.e.*, Applicant continues (indefinitely) to maintain no intention or desire to dedicate or surrender any limitations/features of subject matter of the present application to the public.

CLAIMS FOR PRIORITY

Applicant claims priority under §119 of JP 2000-319606 filed 16 October 2000, the certified copy of which was filed 25 April 2001 in the prior application. Written acknowledgment of the completion of requirements for priority under §119 is respectfully requested.

Applicant claims benefit under §120 of 09/793,513 filed 27 February 2001, and the specification of this continuation has been amended to identify the earlier

application upon which benefit is claimed. Written acknowledgment of the completion of requirements for benefit under §120 is respectfully requested.

EXAMINER INVITED TO TELEPHONE

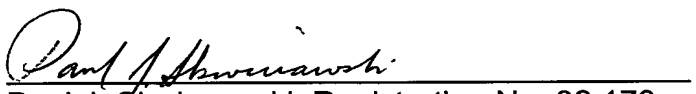
In view of the extensive prosecution in this case, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the local DC number of 703-312-6600, to discuss an Examiner's Amendment or other suggested actions for accelerating prosecution and moving the present application to allowance.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that the claims as presented herein are now in condition for allowance.

This Preliminary Amendment is being filed concurrently with the present continuation, and is therefore timely. No additional fees are required for entry of this paper. Please charge any shortage in the fees due in connection with the filing of this paper to ATS&K Deposit Account No. 01-2135 (as Case No. 501.39761CX1).

Respectfully submitted,



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